Composite Sonar and Tectical Weapon Control System

2320. SHRI CHANDRA BHUSHAN SINGH : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Composite Sonar tactical Weapon Control System developed and deployed on a submarine is lying idle for the last many years;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the said system was to be deployed in the year 1993; and

(d) if so, the reasons for not deploying the same so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI N.V.N. SOMU) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The system was required to be developed and installed on board as submarine and its user trials were to be completed by November, 1993. However, due to foreign exchange crunch and restrictions imposed in 1991 on import of some critical components, the date of completion of the above tasks has been extended by the Government to December, 1997.

(d) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Assistance for Pilgrimage

2321. SHRI SOHAN BEER : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government provide any grant or financial assistance to the pilgrims undertaking travel to the religious places abroad;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the norms prescribed for providing such financial assistance by the Government; and

(d) the financial assistance provided to the Pilgrims who visited religious places, Nankana (Pakistan) and Manasarovar (China) during the last three years, year-wise?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL) : (a) to (d) No State assistance is direclty given to the pilgrims.

2. For Haj pilgrims who perform Haj under the auspices of the Central Haj Committee, Government fixes a Haj pklgrim fare which is generally lower than the fare calculated on the basis of actual expenditure. The difference is borne by the Government as subsidy on account of Haj transportation arrangements and paid directly to the Air Charter. In addition, Government depute administrative and medical contingents (doctors and para-medics) to Saudi Arabia and also supply medicines and attendant medical facilities such as ambulances, camp dispensaries etc. to attend to the needs of the Haj pilgrims. It has to be appreciated that annual Haj is a pilgrimage of unprecendented magnitude in which million of pilgrims from the Muslim world congregate at one venue on given dates and, therefore, require special attention. No such facility is extended for Umrah, a pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina round the year.

3. In case of Sikh/Sehejdhari and Hindu Jathas from India to Pakistan, Government extends all required assistance, obtains approval of the Government of Pakistan for the visit of each Jatha; coordinates with various State Governments/Ministries/Authorities and forwards the lists of intending pilgrims to the Pakistan High Commission, New Delhi for visas; arranges with the Ministry of Railways special train services for the pilgrims both for onward/return journey; expedites release of foreign exchange from Reserve Bank of India as a special case in view of the fact that permission for Jathas is given at short notice and visas are stamped on the pilgrims' passports just one or two days prior to the departure of the Jathas; attaches a Liaison Officer from the High Commission of India in Islamabad to render assistance to the visiting pilgrims when they contact for any kind of help, etc.

4. For Kailash Mansarovar Yatra, Government decided in 1996, to peg the amount payable to Kumaon Mandal Vikas Nigam (KMVN) by pilgrims at the rate of Rs. 5000/- per pilgrim. The total cost charged by KMVN was Rs. 8250/- per pilgrim. The difference was paid as subsidy by Government to KMVN. Otherwise, Government have been providing facilities to pilgrims which include medical assistance, security and escort cover through ITBP and UP State Police, communication links between Delhi and places en route on the Indian side and with China and a Liaison Officer at Government cost with each batch of pilgrims.

Joint Ship Service between India and Russia

2322. SHRI RAJKESHAR SINGH : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether any agreement has been signed between India and Russia to start a joint ship service;

(b) if so, the salient features of the agreement; and

(c) the date from which this agreement will be made effective?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The agreement on the operation of a Joint Liner Service between ports of Novorossisk, Russia and the ports of India was signed between the Shipping Corporation of India and NOVOSHIP of Russia on 11th February, 1997. The salient features are :

(i) The Joint Liner Service would be operated between the ports of Russia and India with

basic ports being Novorossisk and Mumbai and the optional ports being Constantza, Varna, Bourgas, Ilyichevsk, Odessa, Ust-Dunaisk in the Black Sea and Chennai, Kochi, Calcutta in India.

(ii) The parties agreed to provisionally provide monthly sailing in each direction.

(iii) Each contracting party would deploy vessels of DWT 10/15000 MT suitable for carriage of conventional cargoes and containers.

(iv) The Joint Maritime Commission will co-ordinate operation of the liner service.

(c) The agreement came into effect from the date of its signing.

[English]

Fee Structure in Private Professional Institutions

2323. SHRI A.C. JOS : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whethe the Union Government have chalked out any policy guidelines for determining fee structure in private unaided professional educational institutions;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether State Governments have been consulted on this issue; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MUHI RAM SAIKIA) : (a) to (d) As a sequel to the judgement of the Supreme Court dated the 9th August, 1996 arising out of the implementation of the Unnikrishnan case, draft guidelines have been framed after consulting the State Governments and other agencies with regard to the fee structure in private unaided professional colleges. The final outcome depends upon the approval by the Competent Authority.

[Translation]

Infection in Milk of Indian Mothers

2324. SHRI S.P. JAISWAL : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether as per the report of the World Health Organisation the milk of Indian mothers has been infected by the toxic contents upto 21 per cent due to consumption of vegetables, fruits and foodgrains which get poisoned by the use of chemical fertilizers are pesticides; and

(b) if so, the remedial measures being taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SALEEM IQBAL SHERVANI) : (a) According to some studies, presence of pesticide residues have been reported in human milk samples. This is a world-wild phenomenon and not confined to India alone as the residues remain in the soil for several decades and are passed from the soil then the found into mother's milk.

(b) Use of DDT is already benned in agriculture and safer pesticides have been identified. The import, manufacture and use of pesticides are regulated under the Insecticides Act which provides for registration of pesticides for use after their safety to human beings on various parameters of toxicity is established.

[English]

Kashmir Issue

2325. SHRI NITISH BHARDWAJ : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's policy has undergone any change with regard to Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (POK);

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have taken note of Dr. Farooq Abdullah's statement to made the present boder in Kashmir as International Border; and

(d) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The entire State of Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of the Indian Union. The issue which remains to be resolved is the vacation of the territory of the State of J and K which is under Pakistan's illegal and forcible occupation. India is committed to the resolution of all India Pakistan issues in accordance with the Simla Agreement.

[Translation]

Survey on Goghra Jaiversan Project

2326. SHRI PUNNU LAL MOHLE : Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) the number of times on which survey has been conducted on the Goghra Jaiversan Project in Bilaspur district of Madhya Pradesh and the expenditure incurred thereon so far; and

(b) the reasons for not granting approval to this project inspite of the above said survey and the time by which it is likely to be approved?